

Remarks

Original claims 1 through 14 have been cancelled and rewritten as new claims 15 through 29 which are submitted as more clearly defining the claimed invention and distinguishing the same over the references of record. Favorable consideration of the newly submitted claims respectfully is requested in view of the following comments.

Applicant's initially submitted claims were rejected as being either disclosed or taught in German Patent No. DE 199 31 979 and U.S. Patent No. 6,491,531 to Reinmueller et al. Applicant submits that neither of such patents either discloses or teaches the claimed invention taken either singularly or in combination. Each of the newly submitted claims provides either an electrically conductive means connected to the ignition coil component provided with a socket for receiving a spark plug, and shock absorbing means disposed in such socket engageable by the spark plug upon insertion thereof into such socket, or an adapter mounted on the ignition coil component and displaceable relative thereto along a line of travel, having a socket disposed therein for receiving the head portion of a spark plug, and shock absorbing means disposed on the line of travel between such adapter and one of the ignition coil component and the head portion of the spark plug when the head portion of the spark plug is received within such socket.

With respect to the cited German reference, although such reference discloses a contact element 8 construed as an adapter and an element 9 construed as a metal electrically conductive shock absorbing element, such element 8 is not a displaceable adapter but merely a contact element fixedly disposed within the ignition coil component, element 9 is not a metal electrically conductive shock absorbing element but a cup shaped member containing a coil spring 10 and coil spring 10 does not urge element 8 into engagement with the head portion of the spark plug but merely functions to pre-stress element 9 according to a translation of the abstract of such reference, a copy of which translation is enclosed for the convenience of the Examiner.

With respect to the Reinmueller et al Patent, it is submitted that element 11 is not an adapter but merely a plug-in connector provided with a protective jacket 29 surrounding an electrically conductive contact part 28 so that it can not be displaced within jacket 29. See column 2, lines 19 through 27.

In view of the foregoing, it respectfully is requested that newly submitted claims 15 through 29 be allowed and further that the application be passed to issue.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any underpayment of fees or credit any overpayment of fees in connection with this communication to Deposit Account 19-4375.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter N. Lalos", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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(54) Spark-Plug Connector

(57) The invention relates to a spark-plug connector (1) for transferring ignition current to a spark plug (2) of an internal combustion engine. For this purpose, the spark plug (2), in addition to a conventional contact (4), has an additional contact element (9) that allows a transfer of a measuring current to detect relevant characteristics. For this purpose, the contact element (9) is prestressed by means of a spring element (10) relative to a frontal connector (7) of the spark plug (2).

The contact element (9) is therefore insensitive relative to variable operating conditions, in particular thermal influences and vibrations, and thus makes possible a largely error-free transfer of the measuring current with high accuracy.